

DISSERTATION

ON THE

First DAY of the Week

AND THE

Last of the World:

OR,

A beautiful Descant on the DAY
of JUDGEMENT.

By a Young Gentleman, Student in Divinity at
the University of Cambridge.

*Repent, O man, before it is too late;
Leave off thy sins, make sure thy future state;
Then after death, a fairer place be yours,
Than all the sweets of Eden's pleasant bowers.*

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A

Dissertation on the first day of the Week,

A N D T H E



Last of the World.

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EXOD. xx. 8. *Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy.*

CONSIDER this, O man! and remember the strict commands of thy God. The almighty and everlasting Being, from his infinite goodness and mercy, has thought proper to give thee six days to labour in, and reserv'd only one day for himself; and will we puny mortals, beings of a day, dare to put the Almighty to defiance, and rob him of that too.

There is a certain pleasure arises in the mind of man from the strict observance of this most holy day, that all the wild variety of forbidden pleasure the world can afford, cannot equal. *In six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day, wherefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath day and hallowed it.* I say, that God who spoke the heavens and the earth, and all their glorious retinue into existence, he who placed the glorious sun in the firmament, that splendid luminary, the fountain of light and heat, and of all the fair creation, the only resemblance of its great Creator: He who lighted up the silver moon, whose lucid rays yield beams of comfort to a benighted world: He who deck'd the spacious arch

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arch of heaven with countless stars, and adorned it with all the lovely drapery of the skies: He who said to the wide extended ocean, hitherto shalt thou come, but no further: He it is, who commands thee to *remember the Sabbath-day*: and dost thou, O man! disobey the strict commands of thy God, who, in the twinkling of an eye, can annihilate thee to thy original nothing. An air of reverential awe reigns this day o'er the spacious world, and all nature seems to assist in the grand solemnity. The flowing tresses of the beautiful Aurora, scarce waves in golden ringlets o'er the dappled east, when the early lark, in notes far sweeter than his usual lay, ushers in the sacred morn, while all the sweet harmonious feathered tribe, in various plumage dress, that keenly perches on each lofty tree, or wings their way thro' fields of trackless air, join in the general concert to warble forth the praises of their Maker, and the world's great Lord.

The leafy woods, the hollow rocks and plains, the fragrant bowers, whose grateful odours breathe ambrosial sweets, and blooming groves, of sweet enamel'd flowers in each fair garden, rings with the joyful song, till heaven's high arch reverberates the sound. The neighing horse, the lowing ox, and all the numerous quadruped creation that sport along the enamel'd plains, or savage rove through distant wilds, assume this day an air of gravity. The buzzing reptiles humm from pole to pole, and breathe in inarticulate sounds, the praises of their all-creating Lord. Noble examples, and wisely design'd by God to instruct and teach mankind to shun the direful road of vice, and tread the golden paths of virtue, whose flowery walks lead after death to the mansions of eternal bliss. Thus the irrational creation outvies man in his duty this day, and strictly observes the laws imposed upon them.

by their great Creator; nor since the day the great
JEHOVAH made this spacious world; and hung it
in the air, did ever any yet of all the fair creation
on earth, in air or sea, except rebellious man dis-
obey the mandate of the everlasting Deity, or de-
viate from their first estate? No, 'tis only man that
breaks the Lord's commands; but remember this,
that your deaths are certain, and your judgement
sure. The glorious sun from the golden chambers
of the flaming east, will one day arise and dart forth
his cheering beams on thee; but never to set on
thee again; and one evening he will withdraw his
parting rays from thee never to rise on thee again.
I tell you there will come a morning, when you
shall never see an evening, and an evening when
you shall never see a morning. These things you
may believe are no fictions, nor vain imaginations
of visionary brains, but all sad realities. Live
therefore in this world, so as you may obtain an
eternal happiness in the next, and if thou hast done
evil do so no more; for *what doth the Lord require
of thee, O man, but to do justly, and love mercy,
and to humble thyself to walk with thy God* (by
keeping his commandments) for thou may believe
it, if thou breakst off thy sins by a sincere repen-
tance, and fly to, and believe on the ever-blessed
Jesus, he will have mercy upon you, and receive
you, as he hath promised, into his everlasting
kingdom. What are all the fleeting pleasures of
this transitory world, compared to an everlasting
happiness in the next? Is it possible then, that
man, who is a rational being, and possessed of an
immortal and never-dying soul, should so far forego
his interest in an eternal world, as to place all his
happiness in this. It is certainly a delusion. Can
the sounding titles of a high birth, the airy gran-
deurs of a court, the numerous retinue of a gilded
chamber, or all the flattering pageantrics of state,
which

which often vanish e'er yet half enjoy'd, leave a deep impression on the mind of man as to render him altogether incapable of the sweet contemplations of a never-ending felicity. It so, it were better we had never existed, nor wak'd to life in this world. If all our happiness is plac'd here, and after death no prospect but to exchange our darling pleasures, and our short-liv'd joys in this world, for eternal horror in the next: Oh! how I shrink back and shudder at the thought, nature recoils and chills the blood in every vein; but still there is hope on this side of death, a lasting hope which dawns eternal day; for the blood of the immortal Jesus, through a sincere repentance, can wash from every sin.

The inexpressible pleasure, which a truly religious man enjoys in the strict performance of his duty to God (as far as in him lies) so far outbalances the sensual pleasures of this life, that a drop of rain to the spacious ocean is no comparison. And the great duty of *remembering the Sabbath day to keep it holy*, is certainly productive of every good; because there are very few, nay, I hope none at all, who delight to observe this holy day, but will have a guard upon themselves the ensuing week, and do all that in them lies to keep it holy too; but if we mispend this holy day, how can we expect the blessing of the Almighty to follow us in the other six. Therefore, O man, whosoever thou art, for the good of thine everlasting soul, and for the sake of our ever blessed and glorious Redeemer Jesus Christ our Lord, *keep this day holy*: On this day did he who died for the sins of a ruined world, rise again to the resurrection of eternal life, and finish'd the glorious and incomprehensible plan of man's everlasting redemption. And, on this memorable day, it may be, that our immaculate Lord and Saviour, the ever-
blessed

blessed Jesus, may command the archangel to blow the last trumpet, and summon both quick and dead, high and low, rich and poor, from the four winds of heaven, to appear before the awful tribunal of this our Lord, our Saviour, and most just Judge. Ah! in what a trembling situation will the wretched miserable sinner then appear, who has spent his life in all kinds of debaucheries, and has not before death repented of his folly, when he beholds in flaming glory, attended with all the glorious host of heaven, the radiant face of his offended Saviour, the omnipotent Judge of all the earth descending in the clouds to take vengeance on a guilty world, attended with ten thousand thousand myriads of saints and angels in his train. Oh! tremendous day, that wish'd for day by the ever-blessed company of God's elect; but, oh! with what dreadful horror, will that day burst upon those poor dejected souls doom'd to eternal perdition, all sorrowful, all disconsolate, all in tears and universal horror, will then sit ruefully triumphant on their meagre brows. Not one ray of comfort nor beam of hope, nor joy, nor pleasure, will sparkle in their eyes, and nothing appear in their baleful countenances, but a tearful looking for a dreadful judgement. Oh! sinner, remember these things while here in this lower world, and meditate on thy latter end, for then, alas! it will be too, too late when the graves are opening, the rocks rending, mountains rocking, the ocean boiling, and nature bustling from pole to pole; that awful day will put a period to all things, to the reign of kings the power of princes, and the pomp of worlds. In that day shall the mighty emperors, the kings and princes of the earth, lay aside their purple robes of royalty, the golden sceptres, and the diadems of state, to take their trial before the King of kings; in that day shall fall to pieces the sumptuous palaces, the

the splendid mausoleums, and the triumphal arches of the great, the large and populous cities, which for trade and commerce had monopoliz'd the riches of the world, and whose stately and magnificent curiosities, had perhaps for ages unknown, been the wonder and admiration of the curious traveller, must then exchange their transitory greatness, to fall a victim in the burning world. In that day, shall the glorious Maker of heaven and earth arrest the rapid motion of our rolling sphere, and stop the career of the glorious sun, in the firmament, that splendid luminary that glads all nature with his cheering rays; the silver moon, that lucid orb, that supplies the absence of the distant sun, and gilds the horror of the raven-colour'd night, shall no more move round her axis, no more observe the periodical revolutions, her blunted changes nor her blazing fulls; the planets stop in their rounds, and the twinkling stars commanded to move no more, by that God who made them, launch'd them from his arm, and hung them in the air; all shall cease and the glory of the world shall be no more, and the archangel shall proclaim in a voice as rolls the thunder loud, that shall reach to the ends of the earth and sea, and reverberate the sound through the lofty arch of heaven, *That time shall be no more.* O! that divine contemplation in all her rich attire, would take full possession of the heart of every mortal while here in this world, and instil in their minds, the continual thoughts of a future state; the heaven they have to enjoy, and the hell they have to escape. O! what man, upon a serious reflection on these two opposites, would not be enraptur'd with the endless joys of the one, while the dreadful thoughts of the everlasting torments of the other congeals the very blood in the veins; but O! what pen can describe, or imagination paint the transcendent happiness, that forever reigns

view through all the mansion of eternal bliss,
Of the joy, the ineffable pleasure it must be to a
departed soul, to be ever in the presence of the
ever-blessed and immaculate Lamb of God; to
whom the saints and angels tune their golden lyres
to resound his praise in eternal hallelujahs through
all the golden concaves of heaven. There sits the
supreme Deity enthron'd in flaming glory, at whose
effulgent presence, the splendid rays of ten thou-
sand suns would dwindle into nothing. There
reigns an eternal spring; there is no night there,
and a verdure unfading, crowns the celestial plains.
There the flowers forever bloom, and diffuse im-
mortal fragrance through all the bowers of ever-
lasting bliss. There grows the tree of life, whose
grateful fruit pregnant with nectarean juice, makes
those who eat to hunger no more. There is the
pure water of life, as it were running along sands
of gold, and falling o'er rocks of transparent chry-
stal, forming the most beautiful cascades, of which
if any one drink he shall thirst no more. This is
the haven for the wearied soul, the place of de-
lights and the kingdom of felicity prepared for the
spirits of the just made perfect. To this habitation
may all the ends of the earth seek. *Let the wicked
forake his way, and the unrighteous man his thought,
and I will have mercy on him, and welcome him to*
those regions of unclouded joy, saith the great
God of heave, and earth. *Watch ye therefore and
pray, for ye know neither the day nor the hour in
which the Son of man cometh* Now to the sacred
Trinity, be all honour and glory, thanksgiving and
praise, from henceforth and for ever. Amen.

T. I. N. I. S.

